1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 / SS19 Yaruro SS19

In the case of the Yaruros all of these factors have played an important role and are currently active in reducing their territories and food supply to a degree that will mean imminent extermination of the people. It is true that since the first settler arrived in their country the Yaruros could have made readjustments in their culture which perhaps might have permitted them to survive. They could have learned, for instance, to raise horses, cattle, and to cultivate the soil as the Guajiros, living in a country similar to the llanos, have done. But they have chosen to remain firm in their own culture, own traditions, and own universe, and as a result are expecting to pay the penalty. Why they have failed to make the readjustment which would have brought them into a livable relationship with the newcomers and have persisted in keeping to their primitive, nomadic existence may be answered in the pages that follow.

Dependency on hunting, fishing, and gathering of edible fruits and roots imposes nomadism upon a people and prevents living together in large groups. The degree to which a people have to wander, the extent of the territory over which they must roam, and the size of the group, is dependent upon the abundance of the food supply in the region. The Yaruro hunting groups are small and they stay in one camp not more than a few days; so, they are to be met plying up and down the river in their canoes or traveling over land to the water holes, ever hunting for food.

HUNTING TERRITORIES

Each hunting group has a territory over which it is free to roam. Over this region only its members are allowed to hunt and gather fruits and roots, but the rivers, the main streams, are open to all. The accompanying map shows the limits of the present hunting territory of the Yaruros of the Capanaparo. It would seem that anciently, when the Yaruros were more numerous, they roamed over a vaster region cut up into small portions over which hunting rights were distributed among various hunting family groups. I was assured that the Yaruros of the Sinaruco also have divided their country into family units.

There is also a sort of division among the Yaruros which transcends family grouping. The Yaruros of the Capanaparo, for instance, consider themselves a unit, though loosely bound, as distinct from the Yaruros of the Sinaruco, so that they consider the land drained by the Capanaparo as theirs and the region drained by the Sinaruco as the land of the Yaruros of that river. And yet, above all this, there seems to be a tribal feeling as opposed to the tribal divisions. The real significance of this is that among the Yaruros there is permitted a degree of mutuality in the use of the hunting rights

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

251 During the rainy season the seed of the chigua is gathered. It is crushed, toasted, and stored in small quantities in the same way as the changuango, provided, of course, that a spot is found high enough to keep it dry.

Social Organization and Social Customs

596 616 622 791 554 Economically the family hunting group is the basic unit, as has been shown in the previous chapter. In social matters, however, it is the moiety. Each family hunting group recognizes a headman and each moiety recognizes a chief who in all cases is the shaman. Both of these positions of authority are acquired only through personal merit. There is no inheritance of chieftainship or shamanism. If the nephew of a headman shows ability he may inherit his uncle's position, and theoretically this is the scheme. In natural practices we find that not only the Yaruros but perhaps a great many other primitive peoples are very realistic and are loath to give authority to an individual whose personality does not stand for leadership.

616 428 Every Yaruro is born in either the "Itciai" or "Puaná" moiety. Descent, with its social affinities, prerogatives, and obligations, being traced through the female line, the child belongs to its mother's moiety. Nothing is inherited from the father, who belongs to the other moiety, except obligations.

616 773 There is a legend among the Yaruros that two young men not finding any marriageable girls among their own people mated with the Jaguar and with the Snake. From these two unions are descended the two moieties. Since only among animals do brothers and sisters mate it has become a rule that two descendants of the Jaguar, "Itciai", cannot marry with each other; nor can two descendants of the Snake, "Puaná", marry with each other. They must seek a mate from the other group. Thus an "Itciai" must always marry a "Puaná", and vice versa. Cross-cousin marriage solves this problem.

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604 In this system, therefore, a man's children belong to his wife's moiety, from which he is socially excluded. His sister's children, on the other hand, are socially close to him since they too inherit moiety membership from their mother which is the same as his own. Deprived of his own children to carry on his traditions, a man looks to his sister's children to take their place. It is his nephews who will help him in hunting, who will come to his defence, who will take care of him in old age. As if in payment of such attention he gives them his daughters in marriage. Thus his sisters' sons become his sons-in-law.

621 596 Yaruro society is built around the hunting group, which in numbers is never stable. The hunt and the gathering of food such as roots and fruits calls for a certain amount of cooperative effort, but

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

621 596 rarely is there need to enlist the services of persons outside the family group for it.

A typical hunting family will consist of the "old man," his wife, their unmarried sons, unmarried and married daughters, their sons-in-law, perhaps an unmarried brother or two, or without a father-in-law with whom to live, the parents-in-law unless they be dead, and the grandchildren, that is, the children of the daughters. To this nucleus there may be attached, temporarily, stragglers from other groups, old people and young children without relatives to take care of them, and visiting children of the man's sisters.

When two hunting groups meet very often they will camp together for a few days. If food is plentiful they may spend some of the time in merrymaking. Those bands which are in touch with the ranchers may gather together to perform a given piece of work for the meager pay that they may receive.

621 178 In actual practice it is almost impossible for a hunting group to consist of a theoretical family as described. This is especially true now that the Yaruros are disappearing so rapidly. The women may have a series of husbands, as if one dies, or is killed, and the men may have a series of wives. Any genealogical table, therefore, is very confused.

616 621 596 The group of El Burron consisted of the following: Two sisters who had been married to Fauste, a cross-cousin but who was now dead; one of these women, Agapita, had two daughters, both of whom married. Isabel, one of these daughters, was dead at the time of my visit, but she had two children, a boy and a girl, who were still living. Her sister had married, lost her husband, but had four children, all living. The sister of the old woman, Agapita, had a boy and a girl, both of whom were living with the group. Fauste had a brother and a sister, now very old, and both living with the group. His brother had a daughter, Maria, who was also living with the group. On analysis we find, therefore, that, as the group existed at the time of my visit, there were twelve members of the Puaná moiety and three members of the Itciai moiety (fig. 23).

The other groups met show a greater confusion. So many individuals had died that there was no fixed form for any group. In some cases the groups would consist of several middle-aged men and women with wives and children and in other groups, such as Landaeta's and Pablo Reyes', they were led by old men—shamans. It is because of the breakdown of the social system under current conditions that the genealogies are not reproduced in this study at this time. 601

606 604 This confusion affects the social relationships between various individuals. For instance, one Garcia was married to Landaeta's

1: Petrullo E-S (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

daughter, but he should have married the daughter of one Juan Bario, who was a parallel cousin of Landaeta, therefore, he actually married not his immediate cross cousin, but his cross cousin once removed. He kept strictly within the cross moiety marriage rule. However, this marriage brought complications in his life, because for all practical purposes he had two fathers-in-law to take care of rather than one. He solved this problem by living with Landaeta, his wife's father, half of the week, and the other half he spent with his uncle,

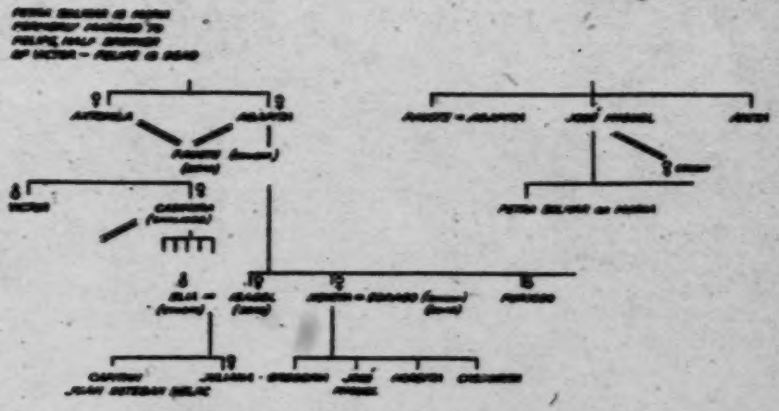

FIGURE 23.—Yaruro family hunting group at El Barrio.

Juan Bario, whose daughter he would have married if she had lived. The sense of service which he owed to his true uncle, his mother's brother, was strong enough to persist, even though it visited a hardship on him.

Within the tribal organization the individual looks to his moiety for guidance, protection, and social intercourse. In return for this he is obligated to members of his moiety in a variety of ways. He acknowledges their affinity to him by seeking their company, by hunting together with them, and by sharing his food with them.

In the family hunting group its head is socially a stranger to most of the people around him. Indeed, if he has no sisters or has sisters who do not have any sons and has no brothers living with him, then socially he is almost out of place in the family hunting group. His wife, of course, belongs to the opposite moiety, and the children trace their descent through the mother. His wife's mother, sisters, brothers and their children belong to the same moiety as herself. When his own children are old enough to take part in hunting they look to their mother and to her brother, or brothers, for guidance and it is toward the latter that they have all sorts of social obligations. To their father they show respect, but to the mother's

1; Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

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Yaruros of Laguneta. Note carrying baskets, digging sticks, bows and arrows. The author is standing at extreme right.

(End Plate 7)

3:Leeds E-5 (1958) 1962 SS19 Yaruro SS19

distance of the gardens is too far from the village for effective or efficient exploitation. At this point a village or part of a village must move. Moving the villages involves decision-making with respect to time, new location, and so on. Plainly, moving a village involves a community decision. A community institution for handling the decision-making is necessary. Technologically speaking, the moving itself is not a community task and does not involve supervision and direction. Therefore, one would not expect the institution of decision-making to be a directive one, but a consultative one. Again this corresponds to the observed modes of action of the Yaruro chiefs. The chiefs' function is to facilitate the formation of the decisions of the community by funnelling and interpreting individuals' feelings and expressions to the rest of the members of the community.

In sum, I have presented a model of a form of ecology which, hypothetically, determines the limits within which any sort of chiefly functions may operate. This model, again hypothetically, is applicable to all cultures having the kind of technological and habitat characteristics and forms of surplus here described. I think the model applies particularly to cultures which grow root-crops such as manioc, which utilize no labor-concentrative techniques, such as irrigation, and for whose food resources notable seasonality is absent. Such cultures have been noted widely in tropical South America and also in Melanesia. In both areas, chiefly functions are notably limited as contrasted, say, with Circum-Caribbean corn-raising cultures with some irrigation and other intensive techniques[24] and with Polynesian high cultures with elaborate irrigation and other public works.[25] It should be noted, first, that the Yaruro were not far from these Circum-Caribbean chiefdoms and even show a number of trait similarities, and, second, that the Yaruro have been under Spanish acculturation, which has involved encouragement of chiefly functions, for probably 250 years. Yet, despite the pressures of both diffusion and acculturation to produce a more developed chieftaincy, the attenuated form described persists. The explanation of this persistence seems to me to be ecological. I suggest that the model of explanation presented here is based on a set of analytic dimensions — the characteristics of the technology, those of the habitat, those of the harvest surplus, and the interrelationships of these — which may be used for all cultures, but whose formal, systemic relations vary from culture to culture, or class of cultures to class of cultures, thus giving different models for different cultures or classes of cultures. By using such dimensions, one can account for cultural differences by means of a standard set of principles, thus faciliating genuine comparisons and generalizations.

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[24] Cf. Sturtevant, 1961; Reichel-Dolmatoff, 1961.
[25] Cf. Sahlins, 1958.

4: Leeds E-5 (1958) 1960 SS19 Yaruro SS19

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make it usable. The need to eat makes woman's work more or less continuous, while the nature of production does not make man's work continuous. As long as there is food in the village, the man may rest, help his wife, or engage in non-food production such as canoe-making, as he chooses.

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Objects used by men are men's property and are inherited by the men; objects used by women are women's property and are inherited in the women's line. Immovable property such as gardens and houses are said to be inherited by the decedent's children of both sexes. Male animals, such as boars and dogs, are owned by men, the females by women. Thus the division of property is as sharp as the division of labor, a fact reflected throughout the ideology.

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No two producers produce the same quantity or inventory of goods, especially as each has great freedom to concentrate in the productive activities he prefers to the exclusion of others. Yet each producer contributes to household and community in what is felt to be equivalent value since most foods are considered good and of equal worth. Each household producing unit distributes supplies of raw or cooked foods to other households along the lines of coresidence and kinship. In this way, all villagers, as consumers, receive the same total amount of food and no one goes without. Thus all persons and households in the community are equivalent as producers, distributers, and consumers. All are tied together in a loosely formalized network of coordinate reciprocal exchanges and obligations in which scales of value are not necessary, since each person contributes approximately equally of all values. In this situation, accumulation of wealth by individuals is out of the question and management of production or of wealth distribution is unnecessary. Consequently, there are no economic status differentiations and no effective leadership among the Yaruro.

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Similarly, no purely social differentiations based on status ranking occur in Yaruro society, except by casual deference to those of age and experience like shamans and village spokesmen, called 'capitans'. The status of women is coordinate with that of men. The complementary and coordinate units, a man and a woman, combine into a series of coordinate but semi-autonomous units, the households. A group of these constitute the Yaruro social unit, the neither endogamous nor exogamous (Murdock's "agamous") village. All these units are tied together by links of bilaterally traced kinship, with coordinate relations on both sides, the ultimate tie being the reciprocal marriage of cross-cousins. Marriage is ideally matrilocal, and occurs most frequently within the village. As a consequence, the most immediate kinship ties in the village are matrilateral, whereas kinship among the men is more diffuse. The villages themselves are tied together by kinship ties, real or imputed, as well as by marriage and visiting, but by no other ties of an all-tribal nature. People who are known to any particular village —to 'us'— are considered part of our village's family, since their kinship ties to our members can be discovered or invented freely. Persons recognized as being of our linguistic and cultural stock will be included under the general term *pumé*, but may not be considered 'of our family' unless the kinship ties are recognized. Thus there is a Yaruro people, but no Yaruro tribal unit. Even the persons included in 'our family' do not constitute a unit, since there are no cross village unifying institutions other than real or imputed bilateral kinship ties. Even these vary from

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4: Leeds E-5 (1958) 1960 SS19 Yaruro SS19

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village to village, since each village constitutes a separate and independent center of relationships with neighboring villages and consequently has its own unique assortment of outside relationships, based partly on choice. This situation, like so many other aspects of the socio-economic organization is reflected in the cosmology.

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According to the Yaruro, the cosmos originally lacked not only humans, but even gods. There existed only three concentric, rigid, blue, celestial domes; below them, a flat, undifferentiated, vast savana all of sand; and a cold, dark, flat underworld. Beyond these there was, and is, nothing. Thunder, already then, was to be found between the upper celestial domes, while Sun, his wife, Moon, and their children, the stars, were already revolving between the lower two.

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Into this cosmos were spontaneously born the primordial gods. The goddess Ku'ma^{n}, the grandmother of us all, who lives in a land to the west, out of the savana created the discrete lands of her fellow gods and of the Yaruro. She created the non-Yaruro peoples, the *nivé*, first, and the Yaruro, the *pumé*, last, which is why there are so few - there were few left to create. She ordered Kiberó, the female toad who lives in the dark underworld to give fire, which she belched from her belly. Ku'ma^{n} created the foods wich are collected and the modes of preparing them. She instructed the men and the women in their crafts. She ordained the social order. Her husband, Pôa'na^{n}, the snake god, who lives in a land to the south, created the characteristic savana features: the rivers, the woods, the grasses for the animals to eat.

He taught men the technology of horticulture and gave them the seeds of the garden crops. He, with his fellow god, Icial, who lives in a land to the north and was born a boy given to troublemaking though he later matured, then taught the arts of hunting and fishing. Poa'na^{n} son, Hachawa, who lives in a land to the east, created only the ceremonial cigarettes. The four godly other-worlds lie beyond the Great Water which surrounds, but is not quite

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contiguous to, the Yaruro hither world. This geographical break in the cosmos is negligible, however, since the hither-world and the other-worlds become continuous in the thought and action of the Yaruro. The Great Water continues in an endless expanse beyond the four other-worlds, according to one interpretation, while in another, it is said to be enclosed by limitless, unpeopled and empty savanas. The four Yaruro other-worlds are also inhabited by a younger generation of gods all possessing Spanish names. Some interpreters identify these with the primordial gods. Others do not. According to some informants, they live in the same lands as the older gods, Others say they live in different lands. Such variations of religious interpretation occur frequently despite general agreement in all essentials. Individual freedom of choice and interpretation, already noted in connection with economic choice and social interrelationships, is also found in relation to ideology.

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The godly other-worlds are generally described as idealized versions of the Yaruro hab'tat. This is true also of a fifth otherworld, one which is discontinuous geographically, conceptually, and behaviorally with the rest of the Yaruro worlds, though similar in form. This is the land of Dios, the God of

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G 101 114 Raymond Fiasson (1) in 1947 reported the existence of

1. Raymond Fiasson, "Algunos aspectos cientificos del Apure /Some Scientific Aspects of the Apure/," in El Agricultor Venezolano, Year XII, No. 127, No. 1947, p. 11.

Guliguli Indians on the banks of the Juriepe, a southern tributary of the Cinaruco. According to our Yaruro informants, these did not exist. Guliguli perhaps is only a synonym for Guahibo-Chiricoa.

The Amburua.

G 101 The Amburua appear to live on the other side of the Meta, on the Rio Negro in Colombia. Not direct neighbors of the Yaruro, they have only rare contacts with the latter. The Y G 648 Yaruro of village 30 on the Riecito recounted to us a fight against the Amburua which took place not far from them, in the course of which their adversaries were decimated.

2. The Habitat (Capanaparo and Riecito Rivers) (see Map 2 and Tables I and II)

Y 361 621 The Yaruro population is divided on an economic basis into small communities, established near a water course and composed of several families grouped under the authority of one head.

Y 361 Along the Capanaparo and Riecito explored by us, there are some 30 irregularly spaced on the 400 kilometers of river (2).

2. We shall dwell in detail on the structure of the communities in other articles, as we have on habitation types further on here.
[see pp. 19-20. -Analyst]

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162 Each community is comprised of ten to 30 individuals
621 including children (average: 17.9), distributed in one or
342 several habitations of which the type varies according to function and the nature of the terrain and the season (1).

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1. The Venezuelan llanos are huge savannas furrowed with watercourses running west-east and bordered with a corridor of forest, narrow but dense; they have a tropical climate characterized by two seasons: a rainy season, winter (June to September), during which the rivers overflow their beds and flood the sayanna, and a dry season, summer (December to April), during which the latter become dry in part, uncovering long sandy shores.

342 The first type (I) is an upright house with a rectangular base (sometimes oval), three to four meters wide by five to seven long and three to four high, without walls and covered with a straw or palm roof with two sloping sides, open or closed at one or two ends and protecting from rain. It is built on the hard ground of high banks that the floods of the rainy season do not reach.

The second type (II) is a small, low hut (a man cannot stand in it) with a round base (II a) or oblong (II b), also without walls and covered with a roof of palms, either hemispherical (II a) or with two sloping sides (II b), protecting from rain; it stands on the soft ground of sand dunes and shores raised above the flood level (II 1), or shores freed by a drop in the water level (II 2).